



PRESS RELEASE

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Idaho Potato Stocks Down 13 Percent from Last Year

Potato stocks held by growers, dealers, and processors in Idaho on February 1 totaled 65.0 million cwt, 10.0 million cwt less than on hand February 1, 2005. Disappearance, at 52.0 million cwt, is down from last year's 57.0 million cwt. Stocks in the 10 Southwest counties totaled 3.80 million cwt, down from last year's revised 4.70 million cwt. The Other counties' stocks, at 61.2 million cwt, were 9.10 million cwt less than the amount stored on February 1, 2005. Processors in Idaho and Malheur County, Oregon used 6.61 million cwt of 2005 crop raw potatoes during January, up 11 percent from last year. For the 2005 crop, processors have used a total of 35.6 million cwt to February 1, down 3 percent from last year. Idaho potatoes accounted for 30.5 million cwt of the total processed. The remaining 5.08 million cwt were produced in other states.

Nationally, the 13 major potato States held 188 million cwt of potatoes in storage February 1, 2006, down 7 percent from last year and 6 percent below February 1, 2004, for comparable States. Ohio and Pennsylvania were dropped from the potato stocks program starting with the 2005 storage season. Potatoes in storage account for 50 percent of the 2005 fall storage States' production, unchanged from last year. Stocks by type were 2 percent red, 9 percent round white, 2 percent long white (Shepody), and 87 percent russets, with a smaller percentage of reds and round whites but a larger percentage of russets than a year ago for comparable States. Disappearance of 185 million cwt from the start of harvest to February 1, is down 6 percent from last year for comparable States. Shrink and loss, at 18.1 million cwt, is down 17 percent from last year for comparable States. Processors in the 9 major States have used 96.5 million cwt of potatoes this season, down 4 percent from a year ago and 6 percent below two years ago. Dehydrating usage accounts for 19.5 million cwt of the total processing, down 11 percent from both last year and the same date in 2004.

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